



Katherine Eleanor Higginbotham

June 29, 1982 - August 27, 2025

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With heavy hearts and profound sadness, we announce the passing of Katherine “Katie” Eleanor Hall Higginbotham, a beloved wife, mother, daughter, sister, and friend, who left this world far too soon on August 27, 2025.

Katie was born in Lakeland, Florida, and was a proud graduate of Lakeland Senior High School (Class of 2001) and the University of Central Florida (Class of 2005). She dedicated nearly two decades of her life to shaping young minds as an elementary school teacher with Orange County Public Schools, where she was deeply respected and loved by her colleagues and students alike. Her passion for education, mentorship, and advocacy for others left an indelible mark on all who had the privilege of working with her.

Katie was a natural storyteller and a radiant presence in any room. She had a quick wit, the gift of gab, a love for music and dancing, and an uncanny ability to freestyle a rap at a moment’s notice. Her vibrant personality and deep empathy made her a trusted friend, an uplifting mentor, and the heart of every gathering.

Above all, Katie cherished her family. She was a devoted wife to her husband, Bill, and a loving, joyful mother to their two children, Maxwell “Max” (8) and Eleanor “Ellie” (4). Her greatest happiness came from time spent with them. Katie’s memory will be lovingly carried on by her children and husband, as well as her mother, Aprille; father, John; sisters, Molly and Hannah; mother-in-law, Sun Smit; grandmother, Eleanor Odom; and her extended family of aunts, uncles, cousins, and countless friends whose lives she touched.

To honor Katie’s memory and preserve her legacy for Max and Ellie, the family welcomes any stories, photos, or memories you wish to share. These will be treasured and passed down to her children as a reminder of the joy and light she brought to others.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly asks that donations be made to the Triple Negative Breast Cancer Foundation (tnbcfoundation.org) or to organizations supporting cancer research.

Tribute Wall

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“Katie was always so welcoming and warm. She had a way of asking simple questions that made you feel like she was so genuinely interested in what you had to say and glad to get together. But one thing I loved about her was her sense of humor. I’ll always treasure the way we could share those laughs that only cousins understand. The kind that came from Grandma saying something outlandish at dinner, or our parents with their attempts to say some embarrassing tidbit. We’d just glance at each other and burst into laughter, knowing we were in on the same joke.

Those moments weren’t just funny, they made family gatherings lighter, warmer, and unforgettable. That’s how I’ll always remember Katie. Someone who could find the humor in anything and make life brighter just by laughing with me. We’d always give each other a big hug and say, we need to do this more often!

Elena Browning - August 30, 2025 at 02:06 PM